

ing capitalists, desiring a field for investment in the iron industry, to give the Coast section of this Province careful and exhaustive examination. So far as fuel is concerned there need be no question. If the object is to produce charcoal iron, there is abundant wood for the manufacture of charcoal. If coke is needed there is an abundance of excellent coking coal, which can be secured by any one who might wish to be independent of the present colliery companies. The transportation of ores and fuel to the point of assembly for smelting would be almost wholly by water in land-locked seas. It is not probable that the cost of labour would materially handicap the industry in British Columbia. It does not in the State of Washington. The exceedingly favourable character of the climate on the Coast of the Province is an element that must be taken into account, because the absence of extremes of temperature and the almost entire absence of snowfalls over the greater part of the area contribute largely to the successful employment of labour in any industry. The local market is necessarily limited, but there is a growing demand in the interior of Canada, while the industry would be established on the ocean and hence all foreign countries would be accessible at a minimum cost. The claim is made by those, who have given the subject some investigation, that iron can be manufactured in British Columbia and exported to the Pacific Coast States at a profit. We do not vouch for the accuracy of this.

On the whole the advantages which British Columbia offers as the seat of a great iron industry are well worth very careful investigation by persons contemplating an investment of that character.

YUKON GOLD AND B. C. CITIES.

LAST year the Boards of Trade of Victoria and Vancouver made a praiseworthy and not unsuccessful effort to divert a part of the flood of Yukon gold from Seattle to these British Columbian cities. Funds were subscribed in Victoria and Vancouver last year to make good any charges in the transmission of bullion from those cities to the mints, so that miners could obtain a full price for their bullion, and a rebate on account of the royalty on gold sold at the B. C. assay offices was allowed by the Dominion Government. The benefit of this policy was felt to a very considerable extent almost immediately, but for some reason that has not been made public, the rebate has been abandoned, and at present no inducements are offered to miners to bring their dust to Canadian cities, so that it now practically all goes to Seattle. This is a great disappointment to the business men of Victoria and Vancouver, who hoped that their efforts last year would have produced lasting results.

The present system of handling Yukon gold is not a good one, and perhaps the interests of all concerned would be best served by the establishment at Dawson of an assay office, where the gold could be purchased by the Dominion Government, cash or drafts on Canadian banks being given for it. Those who are familiar with business conditions in Dawson state that the use of gold dust as a medium of exchange is attended with considerable loss, especially to the retailer. It would be better for the miner and trader if dust went out of circulation in Dawson, and this can only be completely brought about when the Government provides a means whereby miners can realize upon their bullion on the spot. Not many men wish to bring their gold dust out of the country, the greater number of the miners preferring to carry either bank notes or bills of exchange. If such bills of exchange were made payable at par at Canadian banks, their holders would in many cases present them in the British Columbian cities. Probably at least as many of them would do so as would bring bullion to those cities to have it assayed, under any system of assaying that could be adopted. The claim of the British Columbian cities, that steps should be taken so as to attract to them the largest possible share of the Yukon trade, is a reasonable one. They have been much handicapped in the past. Vexatious administration of the customs laws at Skagway, the exceptional treatment accorded by the Canadian Government to United States coasting vessels in the Northwest trade, the fact that a majority of the Yukon miners came from the United States, and the constant and powerful, if intangible, influence of the largest centre of population in the Pacific Northwest drew and continues to draw away from those cities a large part of the business, which under other conditions would have found its way there. If the Government can devise any means of overcoming these handicaps and enabling British Columbian business communities to compete on an equal footing with the United States-cities for the Yukon trade, if, indeed, the Government can discover any reasonable way in which our cities can be given an advantage in this regard, it would be an act of prudent statesmanship to take the necessary steps.

The attention of our readers is directed to an advertisement appearing in this issue announcing that a meeting of the Canadian Mining Institute will be held in Nelson on September the 11th and 12th next for the purpose of organizing a branch in British Columbia. We feel confident that mining engineers and managers in the country will approve of this movement and afford it hearty support. As is of course known, British Columbia of all the Provinces of the Dominion occupies the leading position in point of metalliferous mine output, and it is therefore but right and fitting that this important industry